

Application No. 10/689,775

Docket No. 2002-061R1
PATENTREMARKS

Claims 1-9, 12-19, 22 and 23 are now pending in the above-referenced patent application. Claims 1, 12 and 17 have been amended and claim 23 is new. Applicants respectfully request further consideration of these claims, in view of the amendments set forth above and the following remarks.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) (Charmot)

The Office action rejects claims 1-9, 12-19 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,395,850 (hereafter "Charmot").

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Charmot is directed to dithio compounds useful in assisting in polymerization of monomers in a free radical polymerization, polymers made with those compounds and methods of polymerization. Charmot lists a large number of monomers that can be polymerized with the dithio compounds. See Charmot, column 10, lines 1-57. Charmot also teaches that the polymers can be copolymers and can be random or block copolymers. The examples in Charmot only involve homopolymerizations.

In the present invention, independent claims 1, and 12 require the method step of modifying the surface tension of an olefinic substrate by an amount of at least 10 mN/m with the block copolymer. There is absolutely no mention in Charmot of this step.

The Office action appears to be interpreting the step of modifying the surface tension of an olefinic substrate by an amount of at least 10 mN/m with the block copolymer as a property of the resulting polymer. However, Applicants would respectfully point out that independent claims 1 and 12 were amended to include the positive method step recited. This feature is certainly not inherent in any of the references cited, regardless of the properties of any polymer disclosed therein. Since this method step is not disclosed in Charmot, independent claims 1 and 12 as well as the claims dependent thereon are not anticipated.

Finally, independent claim 22 requires at least partially hydrogenating the random block. This is not taught anywhere in Charmot. This feature, once again, has not been addressed in the Office action.

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For at least these reasons¹, Applicants request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1-9, 12-19 and 22 have been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of Charmot, as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 8-16 and 20-26 of U.S. Patent No. 6,767,968 (hereafter "the '968 patent"), and as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,569,969 (hereafter "the '969 patent").

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Office action appears to be interpreting the step of modifying the surface tension of an olefinic substrate by an amount of at least 10 mN/m with the block copolymer as a property of the resulting polymer. However, Applicants would respectfully point out that independent claims 1 and 12 were amended to include the positive method step recited. This feature is certainly not inherent in any of the references cited, regardless of the properties of any polymer disclosed therein.

Applicants would first like to point out several features and arguments that have been previously made but have never been addressed by any Office action.

- The claims of the '968 patent do not even hint at the use of any dithio control agent being used to make the copolymers claimed therein as is recited in all of the claims of the present invention, modifying the surface tension of an olefin substrate with the copolymers as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 12, or the step of hydrogenating the random block as claimed in independent claim 22.
- Claim 22 requires hydrogenating the random block, a feature which is not taught in any of the claims of Charmot, the '968 patent or the '969 patent

The claims at issue are patentably distinct from the claims in Charmot, the '968 patent and the '969 patent. The present claims require making specific types of block copolymers using dithio control agents. Independent claim 1 requires polymerizing a liquid hydrophilic monomer

¹ Applicants also maintain the arguments previously made with regards to Charmot as it applies to the claims of the present invention.

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in the presence of a dithio-containing control agent to create a hydrophilic block, subsequently reacting the hydrophilic block with an olefin monomer to form an olefinic block and modifying the surface tension of an olefinic substrate by an amount of at least 10 mN/m. Independent claim 12 requires polymerizing an olefinic monomer in the presence of a dithio-containing control agent to create an olefinic block, subsequently reacting the olefinic block with a hydrophilic monomer capable to form a hydrophilic block and modifying the surface tension of an olefinic substrate by an amount of at least 10 mN/m. Independent claim 22 requires polymerizing a hydrophilic monomer under free radical polymerization conditions in the presence of a dithio-containing control agent to create at least one hydrophilic block and subsequently reacting the hydrophilic block with an olefinic monomer and one monomer that is hydrophilic with respect to the olefinic monomer to form the random block, and at least partially hydrogenating the random block.

The claims of Charmot recite polymerizing one or more monomers using a dithio control agent. The claims of Charmot also teach that the polymer can be a block copolymer. The claims of Charmot do not even hint at the specific steps using specific monomer types in the order as recited in the claims of the present invention, modifying the surface tension of an olefin substrate with the resulting copolymer as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 12, or the step of hydrogenating the random block as claimed in independent claim 22.

To the extent that the Office action is relying on the specification of Charmot to fill in any missing gaps, Applicants submit that this is improper. “[C]omparison can be made only with what invention is *claimed* in the earlier patent. . . . Our precedent makes it clear that the *disclosure* of a patent cited in support of a double patenting rejection cannot be used as though it were prior art” General Foods Corp. v. Studiengesellschaft Kohle mbH, 972 F.2d 1272 1280-1281, 23 USPQ2d 1839 1845-1846 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The present claims are not directed generally to making polymers with dithio control agents, but recite specific methods to do so, that are not obvious. The Office action has provided no reasonable basis for supporting a case that the present claims are obvious over the claims of Charmot.

The claims of the ‘968 patent are directed to block copolymers having hydrophilic and hydrophobic components. The claims of the ‘968 patent do not even hint at the use of a dithio control agent being used to make the copolymers claimed therein as is recited in all of the claims of the present invention, modifying the surface tension of an olefin substrate with the copolymers

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as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 12, or the step of hydrogenating the random block as claimed in independent claim 22. To the extent that the Office action is relying on the specification of the '968 patent to fill in any missing gaps, Applicants submit that this is improper as discussed above. The present claims are directed to specific methods for making specific types of block copolymers with dithio control agents. The Office action has provided no reasonable basis for supporting a case that the present claims are obvious over the claims of the '968 patent.

The claims of the '969 patent recite polymerizing one or more monomers using a multifunctional control agent. The claims of the '969 patent also teach that the polymer can be a block copolymer. The claims of the '969 patent do not even hint at the specific steps using specific monomer types in the order as recited in the claims of the present invention, modifying the surface tension of an olefin substrate with the resulting copolymer as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 12, or the step of hydrogenating the random block as claimed in independent claim 22.

To the extent that the Office action is relying on the specification of the '969 patent to fill in any missing gaps, Applicants submit that this is improper as discussed above. The present claims are not directed generally to making polymers with dithio control agents, but recite specific methods to do so, that are not obvious. The Office action has provided no reasonable basis for supporting a case that the present claims are obvious over the claims of the '969 patent.

For at least these reasons, Applicants request the double patenting rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

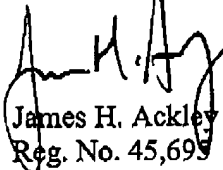
Applicants believe that no further fees are required in connection with the instant amendment. If necessary, however, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fees required in connection with this application to Deposit Account No. 50-0496.

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Respectfully submitted,

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